

Regular Session, 2010

SENATE BILL NO. 584

BY SENATOR PETERSON

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. Creates the Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority. (8/15/10)

AN ACT

To enact Part XII of Chapter 1 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:409.1 through 409.7, and R.S. 36:651(CC), relative to school facilities; to create and provide for the Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority in the Department of Education; to provide for a board of commissioners and an advisory council and for their membership, powers, duties, and functions; to provide for program participation; to provide relative to ownership and control of public school facilities funded through the authority; to provide relative to implementation and funding; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Part XII of Chapter 1 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:409.1 through 409.7, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

PART XII. LOUISIANA STATEWIDE

EDUCATION FACILITIES AUTHORITY

§409.1. Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority

This Part may be referred to as the "Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority Act."

1 **§409.2. Legislative findings**

2 **The legislature hereby finds and declares the following:**

3 **(1) To provide an education for the children of Louisiana, the facilities**
4 **in which those children learn should meet a standard of excellence.**

5 **(2) The physical facilities in which students learn have a major impact**
6 **on student achievement and success.**

7 **(3) School building quality affects the quality of teaching.**

8 **(4) Louisiana is ranked as one of the four lowest states in terms of per**
9 **pupil spending on school facilities.**

10 **(5) School building quality impacts the perception of a school's academic**
11 **quality.**

12 **(6) Improving school building quality in Louisiana should be a top**
13 **priority.**

14 **(7) By understanding the current situation regarding school facilities,**
15 **the legislature and education officials are better equipped to determine the next**
16 **steps.**

17 **§409.3. Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority; creation; board of**
18 **commissioners; meetings; quorum; compensation; employees**

19 **A. There is hereby created the Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities**
20 **Authority within the Department of Education. The purpose of the authority**
21 **is to provide funding, coordination, assistance, and oversight for the repair,**
22 **renovation, and construction of public school facilities.**

23 **B. The domicile of the authority shall be East Baton Rouge Parish.**

24 **C.(1) The authority shall be governed by a board of commissioners**
25 **comprised of seven members as follows:**

26 **(a) Three members shall be appointed by the governor, subject to**
27 **confirmation by the Senate, who shall have a background in construction,**
28 **architecture, or finance.**

29 **(b) Two members shall be appointed by the State Board of Elementary**

1 and Secondary Education, subject to confirmation by the Senate, who shall have
2 a background in construction, architecture, or finance.

3 (c) The state superintendent of education or his designee.

4 (d) One member shall be appointed by the Louisiana School Boards
5 Association, subject to confirmation by the Senate.

6 (2) Members shall be appointed to the board no later than October 1,
7 2010.

8 (3) Appointing authorities shall ensure that the membership of the
9 board is balanced geographically and that the membership is diverse.

10 D. A vacancy occurring on the board for any reason shall be filled in the
11 same manner as the original appointment.

12 E. Four members of the board shall constitute a quorum necessary for
13 the transaction of official business. All official actions of the board shall require
14 an affirmative vote of a majority of the commissioners present and voting at any
15 meeting.

16 F. Members of the board shall serve without compensation, but may be
17 reimbursed for necessary and actual expenses incurred while fulfilling their
18 official duties as a member of the board.

19 G. The board shall meet and organize no later than October 16, 2010.

20 §409.4. Powers; duties; functions

21 A. The authority shall:

22 (1) Collaborate with city, parish, and other local public school boards
23 to determine how best to meet their specific needs with regard to school
24 facilities.

25 (2) Consult with the Education Facilities Authority Advisory Council to
26 develop a formula mechanism through which to assess and prioritize
27 applications for funding for local projects submitted by city, parish, and other
28 local public school boards based on best practices. Such formula shall, at a
29 minimum, include the following:

1 (a) Consideration for student health and safety, projected demographic
2 changes, adequate space needed to accommodate projected student enrollment,
3 and the ability of the local school system to finance school repairs, renovations,
4 and construction projects.

5 (b) Provision to ensure that funds are allocated to city, parish, and other
6 local public school systems throughout the state based upon the regions
7 established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for the
8 Regional Education Services Centers proportional to public school populations
9 within each region.

10 (c) Development of a means for determining the amount of local funds
11 that shall be contributed by a city, parish, or other local public school system
12 for each project funded by the authority which emphasizes the ability of the
13 school system to fund projects locally. The authority may not fund any project
14 at one hundred percent of the cost of the project, except on an emergency basis
15 to repair school facilities damaged by fire, flood, wind, storm, earthquake,
16 hurricane, or any other natural occurrence.

17 (3) Establish design specifications for school facility repair, renovation,
18 and construction projects approved for funding by the board including, but not
19 limited to, energy efficiency and construction materials.

20 (4) Review and evaluate existing funding mechanisms to support the
21 construction and or rehabilitation of schools in the state of Louisiana.

22 (5) Issue a report of its findings to the legislature by December 31, 2011.

23 B. If the appropriate funds are available, the Louisiana Statewide
24 Education Facilities Authority may:

25 (1) Conduct a statewide assessment of public school facilities to assess
26 and evaluate the quality and condition of existing public school facilities and
27 compile a school-by-school inventory of facility deficiencies and needs.

28 (2) Review applications from city, parish, and other local public school
29 boards for funding for school facility repairs, renovations, and construction.

1 **(3) Employ a qualified executive director who shall have a background**
2 **in construction, architecture, or finance to administer the functions,**
3 **responsibilities, and policies of the authority and whose duties shall include, but**
4 **not be limited to the following:**

5 **(a) Manage and administer the daily functions of the authority and**
6 **perform all other functions necessary to the effective operation of the authority.**

7 **(b) Employ necessary staff to carry out the duties and functions of the**
8 **authority. Such staff may include a financial director, a chief of architectural**
9 **services, a liaison for local school systems, and any other necessary support**
10 **staff.**

11 **(4) Submit to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget the formula**
12 **mechanism through which to assess and prioritize applications for funding for**
13 **local projects submitted by city, parish, and other local public school boards**
14 **based on best practices.**

15 **(5) Issue an annual report to the legislature of the authority's activity in**
16 **the previous budget year.**

17 **§409.5. Education Facilities Advisory Council; creation; membership; duties;**
18 **functions**

19 **A. There is hereby created the Education Facilities Advisory Council**
20 **comprised of thirteen members as follows:**

- 21 **(1) The governor or his designee.**
- 22 **(2) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Education or his designee.**
- 23 **(3) The chairman of the House Committee on Education or his designee.**
- 24 **(4) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance or his designee.**
- 25 **(5) The chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations or his**
26 **designee.**
- 27 **(6) The executive director of the State Bond Commission or his designee.**
- 28 **(7) The legislative auditor or his designee.**
- 29 **(8) A representative from the Louisiana School Facility Manager's**

Association appointed by the association.

(9) A representative from the Louisiana Association of School Business

Officials appointed by the association.

(10) A representative of the Louisiana Association of School

Superintendents appointed by the association.

(11) A representative of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers appointed
by the federation.

(12) A representative of the Louisiana Association of Educators
appointed by the association.

(13) A representative of the Associated Professional Educators of
Louisiana appointed by the association.

B. The council shall provide advice and input to the Louisiana Statewide
Education Facilities Authority board of commissioners to inform policy and
funding decisions made by the board.

§409.6. Program participation; ownership and control of facilities

A. Participation by any city, parish, or other local public school board
in any program implemented by the Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities
Authority is voluntary.

B. Each city, parish, and other local public school board shall retain
ownership of and control over any school facility for which funding for repairs,
renovation, or construction was obtained through the authority.

C. The Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority may serve
in an oversight capacity over a project undertaken by a city, parish, or other
local public school board to repair, renovate, or construct a school facility only
to the extent that the project is funded through the authority.

§409.7. Funding

In addition to funds that may be provided by the legislature, the
authority may seek and accept gifts, grants, and donations, including federal
funds, from any available source. Implementation of the provisions of this Part

that require the expenditure of funds shall be subject to the availability of public or private funds, or both, for such purposes.

Section 2. R.S. 36:651(CC) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§651. Transfer of boards, commissions, departments, and agencies to Department of Education; boards, commissions, and agencies within Department of Education

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CC. The Louisiana Statewide Education Facilities Authority (R.S. 17:409.1-409.7) is placed within the Department of Education and shall exercise and perform its powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities in the manner provided in R.S. 36:801.1.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Nancy Vicknair.

DIGEST

Proposed law creates the La. Statewide Education Facilities Authority (the authority) within the executive branch of the Dept. of Education to provide funding, coordination, assistance, and oversight for the repair, renovation, and construction of public school facilities. Provides for an uncompensated board of commissioners, for an executive director, and for an advisory council to provide advice and input to the authority.

Provides that the board shall be comprised of seven members as follows:

- (1) Five members – three appointed by the governor, two appointed by BESE – with a background in construction, architecture, or finance – subject to Senate confirmation.
- (2) The state superintendent of education or his designee.
- (3) One member appointed by the La. School Boards Association, subject to Senate confirmation.

Requires the authority to do the following:

- (1) Collaborate with school boards to determine how best to meet needs.
- (2) Consult with the advisory council to develop a formula and mechanism to assess and prioritize applications for funding local projects.
- (3) Establish design specifications for school construction projects approved for funding by the board.
- (4) Review and evaluate existing funding mechanisms for school construction or rehabilitation projects.
- (5) Issue a report to the legislature by Dec. 31, 2011.

Authorizes the authority to do the following if appropriate funds are available:

- (1) Conduct a statewide assessment of public school facilities and compile school-by-school inventory of deficiencies and needs.
- (2) Review applications from school boards for facility funding.
- (3) Employ an executive director who shall administer the functions of the authority and employ staff.
- (4) Submit the formula and mechanism that the authority is required to develop to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget for approval.
- (5) Issue an annual report to the legislature of its activity in the previous budget year.

Proposed law authorizes the authority to seek and accept gifts, grants, donations, including federal funds, from any available source.

Proposed law provides that participation by a school board in an authority program is voluntary. Provides that a school board retains ownership of and control over any school facility for which funding is obtained through the authority and that the authority may exercise oversight over a project only to the extent that the project is funded through the authority.

Effective August 15, 2010.

(Adds R.S. 17:409.1 - 409.7 and R.S. 36:651(CC))